

# Child Safe Environment

## 1. Overview

### 1.1. Purpose

A stimulating and educational environment relies on the appropriate physical design of indoor and outdoor spaces and their effective use during program time to enable children to play and learn flexibly, safely and comfortably.

Maintaining safe and secure buildings and facilities is vital to ensure staff and children are safe in their environment. Systematic checks are required to ensure that maintenance and repair issues are addressed effectively and promptly. Access to buildings is carefully controlled.

Equipment, documentation and hazardous substances are stored appropriately to enable the program to operate smoothly and safely.

### 1.2. Scope

All children attending Junior Adventures Group (JAG) require an environment that enables them to participate and engage in our program. Staff are responsible for ensuring that the right resources and equipment are available for the right groups and that they are well maintained for an optimal experience for children attending the Service. Access to buildings is carefully controlled to ensure the safety and security of all individuals in attendance.

### 1.3. Legislative Requirements

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, JAG is required to have policies and procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the children in care.

## 2. Policy Statement

The Service's operating environment provides safe, suitable indoor and outdoor environments to encourage safe, comfortable and flexible play.

## 3. Principles

### 3.1. Facility Design

The facility's design must be fit for purpose, incorporating indoor and outdoor spaces that support the access of team members and every child and family member attending the Service.

The built environment should include a visible entrance space, appropriate fencing and secure entry and exit points. The facility that is hired from the school is not always fit for purpose. We work in partnership with the school to determine a space on the school grounds to house the program. A facility must be provided that offers secure indoor and outdoor environments for JAG people to deliver the Service.

### 3.2. Standards for Indoor and Outdoor Spaces

Considerations to ensure that indoor and outdoor spaces provide a positive experience and meet the requirements of the standards include:

- the location of the Service
- the amount of space and how it is arranged and used for different age groups
- the access between indoor and outdoor environments

- the availability of equipment and resources
- the arrangement of the room and its appropriateness for the group and the families that attend it
- the internal and external noise levels
- the visibility and design facilitating effective supervision
- the air quality
- the provision of shade
- the ventilation and access to natural light.

### 3.3. Safe Supervision of Children

JAG is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for the children in our care, Team Members ensure that all play areas and transitions are always adequately supervised in a manner that is sufficient to support the safety and wellbeing of children appropriate to their stage of development. This includes specific attention to the provision of supervision during the transition of toilet use to ensure their comfort, safety and security. A process for transitions for the use of toilets will be established by the Service Leader and communicated to the children, staff and families.

### 3.4. Supervision Plan

A supervision plan should be in place for both indoor and outdoor environments. The plan should be shared at induction and regularly discussed to enable adaptation to different scenarios while the program is running. All team members must understand the content of the Supervision Map to ensure they know key supervision points, as well as prohibited areas.

### 3.5. Prohibited Areas

There are parts of both indoor and outdoor environments where children are not permitted. These areas include storage spaces, offices, laundries and staff rooms. Team Members and families are advised of prohibited areas during induction, and relevant signage is prominent.

### 3.6. Safe Environment

The environment must promote and foster learning, development and wellbeing. This includes:

- having spaces that promote children's need for privacy and autonomy
- identifying barriers that need to be overcome
- ensuring safety when entering and leaving the program.
- Promoting child safety and wellbeing to children and stakeholders
- Promoting the safe use of online environments to children and stakeholders

All environments are to be checked daily for any risks and hazards. Where they are identified, they will be documented and addressed.

Outdoor areas must be regularly checked for the growth of poisonous or hazardous plants, weeds and fungi.

### 3.7. Environmental Awareness and Sustainability

Both indoor and outdoor environments will promote children's access to sustainability and environmental awareness activities.

Resources will be provided to Team Members to assist them in encouraging sustainable practice within their work. They will role model sustainable practices and discuss with children and families as part of the Service's program.

Team Members will use the weekly Program to encourage children to be outdoors, participate in environmentally conscious experiences and maintain their school environment. Program planning will ensure that sustainable practices are part of the daily routine.

The Service will provide facilities for recycling of all recyclable waste including green waste and composting. Service operation will endeavour to minimise waste production by reusing wherever possible, recycling and upcycling materials within the Service, being considerate in their use of energy sources and using eco-friendly cleaning products, where possible.

### 3.8. Cleaning and Safety Procedures

Both indoor and outdoor environments must be clean and safe for all age groups that access them.

Regular checks and audits will occur to ensure indoor and outdoor environments meet the needs of the program and the National Quality Framework (NQF).

Cleaning and safety procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated to support safe participation in both indoor and outdoor environments.

### 3.9. Maintenance and Repair

Team Members are responsible for the day-to-day general cleaning and upkeep of the buildings and facilities. This includes identifying and reporting maintenance and repair issues to ensure they are addressed quickly. Team members are also responsible for monitoring and reviewing maintenance work to ensure problems are resolved appropriately.

Building checklists must be completed as per schedule. Team Members are responsible for identifying risks and issues, recording them in the maintenance log and escalating them with their Line Manager.

Where the repair is urgent, it must be escalated to Management and the school principal. Maintenance issues should be recorded in the Service administration diary, and when conducting safety checks, the information is provided to the school, monitored and followed up by the Service Leader.

### 3.10. Electrical Equipment and Heating and Cooling Systems

All electrical equipment must be tested and tagged annually and checked regularly by Team Members.

Children must not access power points, wall and ceiling fans and other electrical equipment. In addition, power sockets must have childproof covers where deemed a risk.

All heating and cooling systems used must meet the requirements of occupational and workplace safety laws. In addition, users must adhere to manufacturers' instructions.

### 3.11. Waste and Pest Management

Appropriate waste bins should be provided to support the recycling and management of food and general waste.

Pest control is managed on a regular cycle and recorded in the maintenance log.

### 3.12. Safety Concerns

Parents are encouraged to notify Team Members of any safety concerns they may have identified.

Should a service be deemed unsafe, the Service will be closed, and all parties will be notified. The Service will be reopened, with all parties notified, once safety issues have been rectified.

### 3.13. Access to and Securing of Facilities

Only Team Members and Service Leaders have authorised access to the buildings and related areas. All keys and pin code holders are recorded, and people are accountable for their access to buildings. A regular desktop audit of who has access occurs. The offboarding process includes a checklist to ensure that keys and pins are returned on the last day of employment.

All Team Members are responsible for ensuring that the buildings are left in a secure manner. This includes locking all doors, windows and other areas that must be secure. All lights and heating, cooking and other equipment must be checked to ensure they are switched off before the last person departs the Service for the day.

Security measures should be in place to ensure that only people authorised to drop off and pick up children enter the facilities. This includes monitoring those coming and going. Any unauthorised entry to facilities will be addressed immediately by the Service Leader.

Any breaches to security must be immediately escalated within the company. When a break-in occurs, or a person who is not permitted is found on site, the police will be contacted. All breaches are reviewed and recorded on our incident reporting system.

### 3.14. Storage of Equipment

Storage of equipment is maintained in an organised and accessible order so that the Service can best use its resources. The safety of JAG People and children must be considered when determining how and where things will be stored.

Regular review, sorting and cleaning will occur to maintain well-organised, accessible and safe storage spaces. Children and Team Members are encouraged to clean and tidy the spaces they have used.

Hazardous items, such as cleaning equipment, are clearly marked and stored in lockable cupboards as per the *HR Safety Management System Policy and Procedure*.

Electrical equipment and valuable items are stored safely when not in use. Modems and items that store data are kept securely.

### 3.15. Safe Online Environments

JAG recognises every child's right to feel safe and supported, including when using online platforms and technology. JAG is committed to being proactive in the prevention and protection of children from the effects of cyberbullying, image-based abuse and illegal or restricted content.

In our educational program and interactions with children and stakeholders, JAG People will promote awareness of the risks of online environments and safe online practices.

All JAG People are mandatory reporters. In accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, safeguarding concerns or instances of child-related misconduct must be communicated to management, the regulatory authority and state-based child protection reporting authorities.

### 3.16. Information Management

Confidential records will be stored securely, with access restricted to those who need it to perform their duties.

Information will be managed appropriately, including access to sign-in and sign-out records, information about the day and general information pertinent to the program.

### 3.17. Risk Management

Services will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment every 12 months, as well as following any significant changes in circumstances. These assessments will be conducted with consideration to team members, families, children, and schools to ensure service-specific risk mitigation strategies are effectively implemented. Risk assessments will encompass various aspects, including supervision, environment, processes, standard arrangements with the school, as well as emergency and risk mitigation. Furthermore, specific provisions will be made to cater to the unique needs and development of children below school age and children with specific needs, focusing on age-appropriate curriculums, qualified staff, safe and stimulating environments, small group sizes, responsive caregiving, parent involvement, health and nutrition considerations, continuous assessment, and a child-centered approach. This holistic approach to risk management ensures the safety, well-being, and tailored provisions for children in our care, including those below school age and with specific needs.

### 3.18. Review of Procedures

Procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date and consistent with current practice.

### 3.19. Child Safety

We safeguard children through our procedures and practices, with particular attention to their health and wellbeing. JAG People adhere to policies and practices that reflect the relevant legislation, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. JAG provides policies and procedures to equip JAG people with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe and promote child safety and wellbeing. Service Practice are continuously reviewed and improved to ensure current legislation is in effect throughout the business.

## 4. Key Terms

Term	Definition
Indoor environments	According to the National Quality Framework, indoor environments are characterised by open spaces that provide children with opportunities to be involved in self-chosen and negotiated experiences. These can be quiet or active learning situations, solitary play experiences or routines with small and large groups.

Term	Definition
	<p>Quality indoor spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the emerging interests of every child and enable them to demonstrate their innate creativity and curiosity</li> <li>• reflect the cultures, interests, abilities and learning styles of every child</li> <li>• recognise children as active learners and competent decision-makers.</li> </ul>
JAG People	Any adult that governs, manages, conducts work for or provides activities to JAG in a paid or unpaid activity spanning all levels of the organisational structure
Outdoor environments	<p>According to the NQF, outdoor environments are characterised by both active and quiet zones that comprise a balance of fixed and movable equipment, open space to engage in physical activities and spaces that promote investigation and respect for the natural environment.</p> <p>Outdoor spaces that are dynamic and flexible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide opportunities for unique play and learning</li> <li>• complement and extend the indoor learning experiences</li> <li>• offer children opportunities.</li> </ul>
Service Leader	<p>Anyone who oversees the Service in one of the following roles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Approved Provider; if the approved provider is an individual, in other cases, a person with management or control of the Service</li> <li>2. The Nominated Supervisor of the Service</li> <li>3. Responsible Person who has been placed in day-to-day charge of the Service in the absence of the Nominated Supervisor.</li> </ol>

## 5. References

<b>Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations</b>
<b>Other Relevant Legislation</b>
Regulation 73 – Educational Program
Regulation 75 – Information about the educational program to be kept available.
Regulation 76 – Information about educational program to be given to parents
Regulation 103 – Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
Regulation 104 – Fencing and security
Regulation 106 – Laundry and hygiene facilities
Regulation 107 – Space requirements – indoor space
Regulation 108 – Space requirements – outdoor space
Regulation 109 – Toilet and hygiene facilities
Regulation 110 – Ventilation and natural light
Regulation 111 – Administration space
Regulation 112 – Nappy change facilities
Regulation 114 – Outdoor space - shade
Regulation 145 – Staff record
Regulation 151 – Record of educators working directly with children
Regulation 161 – Authorisations to be kept on enrolment record
Regulation 162 – Health information to be kept on enrolment record

Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172 – Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 181 – Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Regulation 183 – Storage of records and other documents
<b>Related Policies</b>
Child Safe Standards 2022
Information Management Policy
OHS Policy
Sun Protection Policy
<b>Related Procedures</b>
01P001 Programming Guidelines
03P002 Physical Environment Guidelines
02P006 Health and Hygiene Procedures
07P010 Operating a Service Procedures
HR Safety Management System Procedure
<b>Other</b>
Guide to the National Law and National Regulations
National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Care
St John Ambulance
Workcover
NSW Health (other states?)
National Quality Standards
OCG Guide to Child Safe Standards - <a href="https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme">https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme</a>
CCYP Child safe Standards - <a href="https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/">https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/</a>
National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - <a href="https://childsafeforhumanrights.gov.au/national-principles">https://childsafeforhumanrights.gov.au/national-principles</a>

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